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RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 8727
RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 5953
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3167
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 3369
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 3773
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 5152
RUEHQ/AMEMBASSY QUITO 5804
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 003290

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [BL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: BOLIVIA: EU BROKERED DIALOGUE FAILS TO MATERIALIZE

REF: LA PAZ 3268

Classified By: EcoPol Chief Mike Hammer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) The publicly announced dialogue between opposition prefects and President Evo Morales brokered by the European Union (EU) has failed to materialize and most likely will not happen until after the holiday season, if at all. German Charge Johannes Lehne expressed his frustration at the lack of will from both sides to talk to each other. Lehne feels Evo is emboldened by recent Mercosur statements of support and radical elements of the MAS and sees no need to give an inch. Charge Lehne predicts both sides will continue to posture with punches to follow come January. End summary.

CLOSE BUT NO CIGAR

¶2. (C) After EU Ambassadors met with Evo Morales on December 14 and brokered an agreement for the president and opposition governors to meet on December 19, the meeting failed to materialize. German Charge Johannes Lehne told DCM that the publicly announced meeting which the EU planned to observe would not take place and most likely will not happen in the near future. Lehne complained that neither Evo nor Minister of Government Juan Ramon Quintana had sent the governors invitation letters as was agreed upon with the EU. Lehne feels Evo is emboldened by recent Mercosur declarations of support and by radical elements with his MAS party to not give an inch. The opposition does not seem in a hurry for dialogue either. Lehne said he spoke with Santa Cruz Secretary General Roly Aguilera who told him there would be

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no meeting. The opposition has made clear it will not sit down with Evo unless all issues are on the table, including the "illegal" draft constitution and the government's cut of

resources to the departments.

KEEP PLAYING WITH FIRE

¶3. (C) Lehne predicted that both sides would keep up public posturing throughout the holiday season with neither one willing to dialogue. He fears that things will heat up again in January, with both sides even more entrenched. Charge Lehne also said he had taken a call from Peruvian Ambassador Fernando Rojas, who said the EU shouldn't be involved in brokering dialogue and to let the Latins handle things in their own neighborhood and implied that other neighboring countries felt the same way.

COMMENT

¶4. (C) Evo's offer to enter into talks with the opposition, with the EU present as observers, seems to have been a savvy public relations ploy to portray himself as open to dialogue.

However, Evo's polarizing rhetoric and his MAS party's steamrolling the opposition to get a new constitution draft, has few believing that the government is open to compromise. Evo will certainly point to the opposition for refusing to dialogue but at least it seems that EU realizes that on this occasion, Evo is to blame. The fact that Evo and Minister Quintana did not follow through with a formal invitation to the prefects is true to form. End comment.

GOLDBERG